

**Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership  
NOAA Community-Based Restoration Grant Program  
Request for Proposals**

**Introduction.** The Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership (SARP), and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Community-based Restoration Program are pleased to request proposals for their matching grant program.

The partnership between SARP and NOAA provides funds for projects in the Southeast Region which further the goal of the Southeast Aquatic Habitat Plan (SAHP): *to maintain, restore, and conserve the quantity and quality of freshwater, estuarine, and marine habitats to support healthy, sustainable fish and aquatic communities and sustainable public use for the benefit of all in the southeastern region and the entire U.S.* The SAHP is available at <http://www.sarpaquatic.org>.

Projects meeting this request for proposals will target the Altamaha (GA), Pascagoula (MS & AL), and Roanoke (VA & NC) watersheds. SARP has completed assessments related to aquatic habitat conservation that provide initial planning information for habitat restoration efforts in those watersheds. The action plans are available at <http://www.sarpaquatic.org/habitat.shtml>. Interested organizations are encouraged to take advantage of the information from the watershed action plans to compete for funding made available in 2008 through this grant.

**Who is eligible to apply?** Non-governmental organizations (e.g., community associations, watershed user groups, cooperatives, civic groups), municipalities, universities, schools, state and tribal governments are eligible to apply.

**What types of projects are eligible for funding?** SARP and NOAA seek to fund projects that will result in on-the-ground restoration of aquatic habitats to benefit living marine resources, including NOAA trust resources (diadromous, estuarine, and marine species and their habitats). To ensure lasting benefits and enhanced community stewardship, each project should include a focused and effective education and outreach element.

For FY 2008, the SARP-NOAA partnership requests proposals for projects that will address habitat restoration in the watersheds associated with the Altamaha, Roanoke, and Pascagoula rivers focusing on but not limited to the following:

*1) Diadromous fish habitat restoration and stewardship.* Diadromous fish migrate between marine ecosystems and freshwater riverine ecosystems for some part of their life cycles. Projects are sought to improve hydrologic flow regimes affected by dams, reservoirs, siltation, and commercial or residential development; to remove impediments to fish passage; to restore degraded riparian corridors which have led to loss of in-stream aquatic habitat needed by diadromous fish; to control or eliminate aquatic invasive species affecting native fish and shellfish populations, or to restore and protect the spawning habitat, foraging habitat, and/or thermal refugia for diadromous species of fish.

2) *Coastal habitat restoration and stewardship*. Projects are sought to restore and protect the nursery, spawning, and foraging habitats of estuarine and marine fish such as riparian corridors along tidally influenced streams and bayous, estuarine wetlands, oyster reefs, seagrasses, coral reefs, and mangroves that have been damaged or lost due to coastal development and other impacting factors; to improve hydrologic regimes in tidally influenced areas; to restore areas impacted by erosion or prop-washing; and control or eliminate invasive species affecting native fish and shellfish populations.

**What is the expected duration of a project?** Work conducted for the project is to be completed within 18-24 months of contract approval. Projects should be designed to begin in late spring or summer 2008.

**What amount of funding is available?** The maximum amount available for any one project is \$50,000. Most awards will be between \$10,000 and \$35,000. Grants are expected to have a minimum 1:1 non-federal match, which may be in cash, time, goods, or other services.

Eligible costs will be paid for work done no earlier than contract approval. Payment will be made on a reimbursement basis with 15% of the grant award allowed up-front.

Grant funds may **not** be used to support overhead, permanent staffing costs, scholarships to individuals, deficit reduction activities, projects that have already been completed, or for activities that constitute legally required mitigation for the adverse effects of an activity regulated or otherwise governed by state or Federal law.

**What is the application process?** To be considered in this first round of funding, a written application must be submitted on or before March 1, 2008.

Only proposals for the types of projects described above as eligible for these funds and having applicability to SARP's pilot conservation action plans for the Roanoke, Altamaha, or Pascagoula watersheds and one or more of the eight objectives of the Southeast Aquatic Habitat Plan (SAHP) will be considered. The SAHP can be found at [www.sarpaquatic.org](http://www.sarpaquatic.org), and the pilot conservation action plans can be found at [www.sarpaquatic.org/habitat.shtml](http://www.sarpaquatic.org/habitat.shtml).

Applicants are strongly urged to discuss project ideas and questions prior to submitting application. For questions regarding applicability to SAHP and the pilot actions plans, contact Marilyn Barrett-O'Leary, SARP Project Manager at 225-892-7470. For technical questions, including those regarding NOAA's trust resources, contact Kristopher Benson, NOAA Habitat Specialist or Heather Young, NMFS Fishery Biologist at 409-766-3699.

Details about application format are provided at the end of this document.

**How are proposals selected for funding?** The proposals will be reviewed by the SARP-NOAA Partnership Project Selection Committee to determine those projects to be funded

in consideration of available funding levels and the restoration goals and priorities of the SARP-NOAA Partnership. The SARP-NOAA Partnership Project Selection Committee consists of the SARP Coordinator and one representative from NOAA/NMFS, each of the SARP coastal states (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia), USFWS, USGS, Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, and the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission.

**What are the proposal evaluation criteria?** Projects will be scored according to criteria in five categories:

- **Category 1: (20 %) Importance and Applicability**

Does the project support the identified habitat conservation objective(s) of the SAHP?

Does the project utilize information from the SARP pilot conservation plan for the project area's watershed?

Does the project contribute to conservation of recreationally and economically important NOAA trust resource species and their habitats?

Considered in the context of the existing local environment, will restoration activities in the target habitat make a significant positive impact?

What is the likelihood that the project will deliver tangible, specific results that are measurable (acres, stream miles, volunteer hours, adequate monitoring parameters)?

- **Category 2: (30%) Technical/Scientific Merit**

Can the major aspects of the project be completed within 18-24 months of receiving funding (excluding monitoring and evaluation)?

What is the overall technical feasibility of the project, from both a biological and an engineering perspective?

Is the proposal technically sound in its use of appropriate methods that are likely to achieve project goals and objectives on both ecological and community stewardship levels?

Does the project address the root causes of habitat degradation or loss, ensuring that the restoration project will sustain itself over time?

Does the proposal provide assurance that the project will meet all Federal, state and local environmental laws and follow applicable permit requirements so that on-the-ground activities will begin soon after the project's proposed start date?

Does the proposal provide landowner assurance of support and dedication to protecting the project for its useful life (such as letter of support, conservation easement, or significant financial investment)?

Does the proposal include an effective mechanism to evaluate project success?

- **Category 3: (10%) Applicant Qualifications**

Do project leaders have the appropriate qualifications and technical expertise or access to appropriate expertise to conduct the scope and scale of the proposed project?

- **Category 4: (20%) Project Costs**

Is the proposed budget realistic and cost-effective, based on the applicant's stated objectives and time frame, and sufficiently detailed, with appropriate budget breakdown and justification?

Does the proposed budget include an appropriate ratio of match leveraged from other sources?

- **Category 5: (20%) Outreach, Education, and Community Involvement**

Will the project also contribute to the aquatic habitat conservation outreach goals of SARP, have value as a demonstration project, or have potential to foster a community conservation ethic through citizen involvement?

Does the project involve public outreach, and seek to disseminate information on project goals, results, project partners and the sources of funding and other support provided, or otherwise compliment or encourage other local restoration or conservation activities?

Does the proposal have significant community support as demonstrated by a diversity of active, contributing partners and/or sponsors?

**When will grants be awarded?** Grantees will be notified of awards within six to eight weeks of the proposal deadline.

**How will the grant funds be awarded?** Successful applicants will enter into a contract with SARP that specifies work tasks, work products, and reporting requirements based on the approved proposal. Applicants will be required to demonstrate that all necessary permits and consultations have been completed prior to conducting any earth moving activities. Each project will be assigned a NOAA technical monitor that, upon request, can assist with aspects of project implementation.

*NEPA Requirements:* NOAA must analyze the potential environmental impacts, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), for applicant projects or proposals which are seeking NOAA funding. Detailed information on NOAA compliance with NEPA can be found at <http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/>. In order for NOAA staff to complete a NEPA analysis, applicants will be asked to provide detailed information on the activities to be conducted, locations, sites, species and habitat to be affected, possible construction activities, and any environmental concerns that may exist (e.g. introduction of non-indigenous species, impacts to endangered and threatened species, aquaculture projects, and impacts to coral reef systems).

*Permitting Requirements:* It is the applicant's responsibility to obtain all necessary Federal, state, and local government permits and approvals where necessary for the proposed work to be conducted including Endangered Species Act consultations as appropriate. Applicants are

expected to design their proposals so that they minimize the potential for adverse impacts to the environment.

*Safety Plan:* Successful applicants will receive and be required to adhere to a written safety plan for management of volunteers.

*Reporting Requirements:* The contract will include specific reporting requirements as follows:

- Progress reports will be submitted to SARP every six months. The progress report form will be available online. Each progress report will describe progress to date. Photos of the site and project are encouraged.
- A final report, including documentation of the completed project and financial report will be submitted to the project administrator within 30 days of the end of the grant period.

**Please use the format below to ensure a complete application:**

No application should exceed 10 pages (optional items such as photos, maps or letters of support do not count toward the page limit).

**A bulleted summary list** (~1 page) To include name and address of applicant organization, name, title, and contact information of principal investigator or project leader, project title, targeted watershed, project focus (diadromous fish habitat or coastal fish habitat), SAHP objective(s) benefitting from this project, NOAA Trust Resource(s) benefitting from the project, estimated on-the-ground start and end dates (not award date), estimated total cost, list of partners.

**Narration of Project Scope (Example A, ~5-6 pages)**

1. **Project description** to include the existing relevant habitat conditions and the desired or targeted conditions, size of area to be restored, NOAA trust resources that will benefit from the restoration activity, and the specific restoration methods and techniques that will be used. **The project description is a critical part of the application** that should provide reviewers with sufficient detail to fully understand the proposed project. It accounts for the majority of the narration pages.
2. **Evaluation plan overview** that identifies at least one structural parameter and one functional parameter of the restoration project site to be quantitatively monitored. These parameters should reflect a major objective or goal of the project. The plan should define a target value (realistic outcome) for the parameter after restoration as well as a reference value (ideal value) for the parameter. Information on the NOAA CRP minimum project monitoring/evaluation requirements can be found at [http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/habitat/restoration/projects\\_programs/crp/partners\\_fun](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/habitat/restoration/projects_programs/crp/partners_fun)

[ding/project\\_reports.html](#). Applicants are welcome to discuss appropriate monitoring plans with NOAA staff prior to applying.

3. **Outreach plan overview**
4. **Current ownership of the project area**
5. **Provisions to protect the restoration project site after project completion**
6. **Description of partners'** reasons for participation or relationship to the threat, problem, or focus of project and evidence of community support.
7. **List of permits** needed (Federal, state, local), indicating any that have already been secured.
8. **Timeline of tasks** necessary to accomplish the project. Projects should be designed to begin in spring or summer 2008.
9. **Timeline of tangible outcomes** (deliverables).

**Map of the proposed project location and site.**

**Budget Table (Example B, ~1-2 pages)**

Categories	Grant Amount	Match Amount	Type of Match	Match Source	Other	Total
Personnel						
Fringe						
Travel						
Equipment*						
Supplies						
Contractual						
Other						
Total						

\*Equipment purchases costing at least \$400 per unit will require prior approval before purchase. Please submit a purchase request to SARP detailing the type of equipment, price, company, and a brief justification of why the purchase is to be made with comparison to rental costs.

Budget justification should include a breakdown of costs that will further explain information in the project description and timeline.

**Optional supporting materials** (do not count toward application page limit):

- Aerial or on-the-ground photos of the proposed project site. Though not required, these visual aids will help to support the proposal. Photos taken from the ground should show the current condition of the site. All photos should be identified with date of photo and location.
- Letters of Support.
- Vita of Principal Investigator or Principal Grant Contact.

**To whom should proposals be submitted?** Send completed proposals to Marilyn Barrett-O'Leary, Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership at the following addresses. Send electronic copies to [moleary@mbolcomm.com](mailto:moleary@mbolcomm.com) by **March 1, 2008** and original copies postmarked by **March 1, 2008** to 2420 Shadowbrook Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70816.